

REMARKS

The above amendment with the following remarks is submitted to be fully responsive to the Office Action of July 17, 2007. Reconsideration of this application in light of the amendment and the allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 and 31-36 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. In response to the Office Action, claims 4-6 and 34-36 are amended to clarify the invention. Support for the amendment of claims 4-6 can be seen in FIG. 1, 5A and 5B. Claims 37-54 are added. The newly-added claims 37-39 were present in claims 4-6. Claims 40-54 correspond to means plus function claims 4-15 and 34-39. Claims 1-3 and 31-33 are canceled. Therefore, claims 4-15 and 34-54 are now pending in the present application and are believed to be in proper condition for allowance.

Claims Rejections under U.S. 35 § 102

Referring now to the Office Action, claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,724,222 to Feldman. By the cancellation of claims 1-3, Applicants believe this rejection is moot.

Claims Rejections under U.S. 35 § 103

Claims 1-3 are rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over any of U.S. Patent 5,907,770 to Yamazaki et al., U.S. Patent 4,724,222 to Feldman, U.S. Patent 5,865,118 to Fromson et al., JP 407260598 A, and JP 404241373 A. Claims 31-33 are rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over any of U.S. Patent U.S. 4,724,222 to Feldman in view of U.S. Patent 5,733,182 to Muramatsu et al. Claims 1-3 are rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,907,770 to Yamazaki et al. and in view of Feldman. By the cancellation of claims 1-3 and 31-33, Applicants believe these rejections are moot.

Claims 4-15 are rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,907,770 to Yamazaki et al. and in view of Feldman. Claims 34-36 are rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Yamazaki et al. and in view of Feldman as applied to claims 4-6 and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,733,182

to Muramatsu et al.

Amended independent claims 4-6 recite “the second means is provided between the first means and the third means so that focus positions of the laser beam passed through the first means and the second means have the cylindrical (concave) shape curvature”. Support for the amendment can be seen in FIG. 1, 5A and 5B.

The Examiner states that “AAPA discloses (in the Specification, the “Description of the Related Art”, and Figures 2 and 3) well known laser annealing apparatus, but do not disclose the means for expanding and condensing the beam and the cylindrical shaped stage”. Additionally, the Examiner states “Yamazaki et al show (Figures 13 and 14) well known cylindrical lens means for expanding and condensing the beam”, and “Feldman describes (column 6, lines 11-19) a concave wafer chuck used with an energy beam apparatus”.

However, Applicants submit that the location of the second means, the cylindrical lens, is not taught or suggested in the cited references. Amended independent claims 4-6 recite a position of the second means between the first means and third means, as well as the focus positions of the laser beam having the cylindrical (concave) shape curvature. Thus, the focus positions of the laser beam passed through the first means, the beam expander and the second means, the cylindrical lens, have a cylindrical (concave) shape curvature that implicitly coincides with the cylindrical (concave) shape of the third means, the stage.

Applicants submit that neither AAPA, Yamazaki, nor Feldman, alone or in combination, teach, disclose or suggest all of the elements of amended independent claims 4-6, including a position of the second means between the first means and third means, as well as the focus positions of the laser beam having the cylindrical (concave) shape curvature. Accordingly, Applicants request the rejection of these claims be withdrawn, and the claims be allowed. Because dependent claims 7-15 depend from independent claims 4-6, Applicants submit that these claims are also allowed for the reasons detailed above, as well as the novel features recited therein.

Regarding claims 34-36, Applicants note that Muramatsu is directed to a wafer polishing apparatus (see Abstract), and thus does not disclose all of the elements of amended independent claims 4-6, including a position of the second means between the first means and third means, as well as the focus positions of the laser beam having the cylindrical (concave) shape curvature. Applicants submit that neither AAPA, Yamazaki, Feldman, nor Muramatsu,

alone or in combination, teach, disclose or suggest all of the elements of amended independent claims 4-6. Thus, Applicants submit that Muramatsu does not cure the deficiencies of AAPA, Yamazaki, and Feldman, and does not render claims 4-6 unpatentable. Because dependent claims 34-36 depend from independent claims 4-6, Applicants submit that these claims are also allowed for the reasons detailed above, as well as the novel features recited therein.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested. However, if any issue remains after considering this response, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned to expedite the prosecution and work out any such issue by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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